

NEWSLETTER

Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas, Chair, Democratic Caucus

Quest for NFL Franchise Takes Another Step Forward

Council votes to implement Ridley-Thomas legislation and pave the way for return of the NFL to the Coliseum

The decade long effort led by Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas to lure a National Football League franchise back to Los Angeles took another step forward on October 11 when the Los Angeles City Council and Community Redevelopment Agency voted unanimously to adopt an ordinance implementing the provisions of Assembly Bill 2805. The joint action takes advantage of authority granted to them by the bill, authored by Ridley-Thomas in 2004, to help to finance traffic and utility improvements to expand and extend the Hoover Redevelopment Project area on an accel-

erated basis.

"With this action, the potential to unlock the powerful economics of professional football for the benefit of the local community, regional and state economies will be enormous, generating millions of dollars in tax receipts with little public funding while attracting retailers, office space, commercial establishments and affordable housing," said Ridley-Thomas. "The Council action sends a strong message to the NFL that the Governor and the State Legislature, along with the Mayor and the City Council are all on the same page."

"Having the NFL back in Los Angeles is a catalyst for new opportunities and prosperity in the project area and beyond," said Shelby Jordan, former professional football player and current real estate developer, in testimony before the Council.

Protection Against Predatory Loans Signed by Governor

AB 901 Adds Important Consumer Protections

Legislation to protect homeowners from losing their homes as a result of unscrupulous mortgage lending practices and authored by Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas (D-Los Angeles) was signed by the Governor. Sponsored by Consumers Union, the Uniform Lending Reform Act (Assembly Bill 901) is supported by a wide range of local governments, community organizations and housing advocates.

The measure adds new consumer protections after an unfriendly California Supreme Court ruling earlier this year preempted local jurisdictions from enacting even stronger legal protections than current state law provides.

AB 901 raises and annually adjusts the protected loan amount from \$250,000 to match Fannie Mae's (the Federal National Mortgage Administration) conforming loan limit, currently \$359,650. The bill also requires the Real Estate Fraud Prosecution Trust Fund to report annually to the Legislature regarding funds received, complaints lodged and investigated, and the number of convictions.

Ridley-Thomas' fight against unscrupulous lending practices began when he was on the Los Angeles City Council. Los Angeles' unique socioeconomic and market condition includes an aging housing stock and a diverse population, making its residents particularly vulnerable to predatory lenders. AB 901 will restore a measure of consumer protection to vulnerable homeowners, many of whom are senior citizens.



Korean Democratic Club caption: Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas was the keynote speaker at the Korean American Democratic Committee's Membership Mixer and Special Reception held in Koreatown.

Where to Vote

The Vote by Mail deadline to mail ballots is November 5, 2005; afterward, please take your ballot to the nearest polling place on November 8th, Election Day. On November 8, the polls are open 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

For information on where to vote, call the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk at 1-800-851-2666 or log on to <http://lavote.net/main.htm> or African American Voter REP at (323) 733-2002 or log on to <http://aavrep.org/>.

48th Assembly District
Empowerment Congress <http://www.adec48.org/index.shtml>

The Hurricane Katrina Resource page offers information surrounding the disaster in the Gulf States.
<http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a48/hurricankatrina.htm>

Governor Signs California Colorectal Cancer Prevention Fund

Bill puts Check-off on State Tax Form

California taxpayers will soon have the opportunity to directly finance efforts to combat colorectal cancer, thanks to legislation authored by Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas and signed into law by the Governor. Assembly Bill 819 allows taxpayers to designate a contribution on their tax return to the California Colorectal Cancer Prevention (CCCCP) Fund.

"We are losing too many lives to a disease that largely can be prevented. Colorectal cancer is one cancer where regular screening clearly has benefits," said Ridley-Thomas.

Sponsored by the Stennis Family Foundation, AB 819 received strong support from the American Cancer Society, Union Bank of California, businessman/developer Earvin "Magic" Johnson, and actresses Jasmine Guy and Patricia Heaton. The Stennis Foundation Board member Erin Stennis said, "This is a major step in the journey to raising awareness of colorectal cancer." View the Stennis Family Foundation website at www.stennis.org.

Many people believe their vote does not make a difference and does not count.

That notion will be put to the test again this November 8, when several ballot measures will be presented to the voters in a Special Election called by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. (Excerpted from Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas' op-ed entitled FORTY YEARS LATER, 'Watts, the Voting Rights Act and the Struggle for Empowerment')



Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas (right) is joined by Bishop Kenneth Ulmer, Del Huff, developers Shelby and Donzella Jordan at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Senior Housing Center on South Vermont Avenue.

Nov. 8 Special Election Ballot Measures

(Excerpted from the League of Women Voters of California
"Pros and Cons" and "In Depth" voter guides at www.ca.lwv.org)

Proposition 73. Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy -- State of California (*Initiative Constitutional Amendment*)

Should the California Constitution be amended to require notification of the parent or legal guardian of an unemancipated, pregnant minor at least 48 hours before performing an abortion on the minor?

Amends California Constitution, defining and prohibiting abortion for unemancipated minor until 48 hours after physician notifies minor's parent/guardian, except in medical emergency or with parental waiver. Mandates reporting requirements. Authorizes monetary damages against physicians for violation. Fiscal Impact: Potential unknown net state costs of several million dollars annually for health and social services programs.

Proposition 74. Public School Teachers. Waiting Period for Permanent Status. Dismissal -- State of California (*Initiative Statute*)

Should the probationary period for public school teachers be increased from two to five years, and should the process by which school boards can dismiss a permanent certificated employee be modified?

Increases probationary period for public school teachers from two to five years. Modifies the process by which school boards can dismiss a teaching employee who receives two consecutive unsatisfactory performance evaluations. Fiscal Impact: Unknown net effect on school districts' costs for teacher compensation, performance evaluations, and other activities. Impact would vary significantly by district and depend largely on future district personnel actions.

Proposition 75. Public Employee Union Dues. Restrictions on Political Contributions. Employee Consent Requirement -- State of California (*Initiative Statute*)

Should public employee unions be required to obtain annual written consent from each member in order to use a portion of that member's dues for political activity?

Prohibits using public employee union dues for political contributions without individual employees' prior consent. Excludes contributions benefiting charities or employees. Requires unions to maintain and, upon request, report member political contributions to Fair Political Practices Commission. Fiscal Impact: Probably minor state and local government implementation costs, potentially offset in part by revenues from fines and/or fees.

Proposition 76. State Spending and School Funding Limits -- State of California (*Initiative Constitutional Amendment*)

Should Californians make major Constitutional changes to create an additional state spending limit, grant the governor substantial new power to unilaterally reduce state spending, and revise key provisions relating to Proposition 98, school and community college funding, and transportation funding authorized by Proposition 42?

Limits state spending to prior year's level plus three previous years' average revenue growth. Changes minimum school funding requirements (Proposition 98). Permits Governor, under specified circumstances, to reduce budget appropriations of Governor's choosing. Fiscal Impact: State spending likely reduced relative to current law, due to additional spending limit and new powers granted to Governor. Reductions could apply to schools and shift costs to other local

governments.

Proposition 77. Redistricting. Initiative Constitutional Amendment -- State of California (*Initiative Constitutional Amendment*)

Should the California Constitution be amended to change the process of redistricting California's State Senate, State Assembly, Congressional and Board of Equalization districts, transferring the implementation of redistricting from the Legislature to a panel of three retired judges, selected by legislative leaders?

Amends state Constitution's process for redistricting California's Senate, Assembly, Congressional and Board of Equalization districts. Requires three-member panel of retired judges selected by legislative leaders. Fiscal Impact: One-time state redistricting costs totaling no more than \$1.5 million and county costs in the range of \$1 million.

Potential reduction in future costs, but net impact would depend on decisions by voters.

Proposition 78. Discounts on Prescription Drugs -- State of California (*Initiative Statute*)

Should the state adopt a new state drug discount program to reduce the costs of prescription drugs for Californians at or below 300 percent of the federal poverty level?

Establishes discount prescription drug program for certain low- and moderate-income Californians. Authorizes Department of Health Services to contract with participating pharmacies for discounts and with participating drug manufacturers for rebates. Fiscal

Impact: State costs for administration and outreach in the millions to low tens of millions of dollars annually. State costs for advance funding for rebates. Unknown potentially significant savings for state and county health programs.

Proposition 79. Prescription Drug Discounts. State-Negotiated Rebates -- State of California (*Initiative Statute*)

Should the state of California create a new prescription drug discount program for residents at or below 400 percent of the federal poverty level, and change state law to make it illegal to engage in profiteering from the sale of prescription drugs?

Provides drug discounts to Californians with qualifying incomes. Funded by state-negotiated drug manufacturer rebates. Prohibits Medi-Cal contracts with manufacturers

not providing Medicaid best price. Fiscal Impact: State costs for administration and outreach in low tens of millions of dollars annually. State costs for advance funding for rebates. Unknown potentially significant: (1) net costs or savings for Medi-Cal and (2) savings for state and county health programs.

Proposition 80. Electric Service Providers. Regulation -- State of California (*Initiative Statute*)

Should the state expand its regulation of the electric industry?

Subjects electric service providers to regulation by California Public Utilities Commission. Restricts electricity customers' ability to switch from private utilities to other providers. Requires all retail electric sellers to increase renewable energy resource procurement by 2010. Fiscal Impact: Potential annual administrative costs ranging from negligible to \$4 million, paid by fees. Unknown net impact on state and local costs and revenues from uncertain impact on electricity rates.